

Largest one day salt marsh planting event in Tampa Bay

On Saturday, October 8, 2005, nearly 200 volunteers completed the largest one day salt marsh planting event ever accomplished in Tampa Bay.

Approximately 23,600 salt marsh plants were installed during a 2.5 hour period to restore 4.6 acres of intertidal salt marsh. Tampa Bay Watch organized the event and recruited volunteers from the local community, including the Tampa Bay Parrot Heads and three high school classes.



Students from local high schools grow salt marsh grasses at their school wetland nurseries and then transplant to restoration sites in Tampa Bay.

The acreage restored during this event is part of a much larger and on-going plan to restore 660 acres of historic shell mine ponds in an area of southeast Tampa Bay known as Cockroach Bay. South West Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) is overseeing the design and construction of this large scale project which includes filling the mined ponds to create intertidal habitat and tidal creeks. Once constructed, SWFWMD depends on Tampa Bay Watch, through its partnership with the NOAA Community-based Restoration Program and Restore America's Estuaries, to organize volunteers and provide plants. Several more planting events are planned for the next year with the goal of restoring an additional 5 acres of salt marsh at Cockroach Bay.

